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presented much more systematically and carefully than has been done on pages 491-497). At times he shows a tendency to ignore or to minimize difficulties. Thus, on page 331 he asks,

Is there then any historical or archeological fact that seriously challenges the old Greek legend in regard to the dissemination in Greece of the Phoenician alphabet?

and answers "We believe there is not" (although, to be sure, he does not fail, in the surrounding pages, to present some of the objections to this view). When, on page 3, he says that he proposes to prove

by incontestible evidence that practically all systems of writing can be traced back . . . to a primitive age. . . when all records were merely the pictures of the things or ideas expressed,

he is allowing himself to be carried away for the moment by his enthusiasm for his subject, unless by his "practically" he means to exclude nearly all alphabets now in use in the world. For nearly all alphabets used to-day are derived from the primitive Semitic alphabet, or at least from a common source with it; and whether it originated in picture-writing or not is still an open question. Perhaps it did, but no one has ever proved it satisfactorily. Indeed, to Mr. Mason's credit be it said that he recognizes this fact; he clearly states (308) that we do not know the origin of the "Phoenician" (that is, Semitic) alphabet. A rash promise is better broken than kept; but it would have been still better not to make it. But, generally, Mr. Mason seems to aim only at summarizing the views of the best and most recent authorities on each subject, without venturing on independent assertions.

When, however, we come to the second and the third of the requirements mentioned above, the reviewer is forced to say that Mr. Mason gives little evidence of qualifications for writing a book of this sort. There are countless minor inaccuracies in the book. Particularly the spelling of words in foreign languages is such as to raise the question whether the author's linguistic equipment is that which the author of such a book ought to have. Such French as "Semétique" (242) for 'Sémitique', and such German as "Griechsichke" (496) for 'Griechische', can hardly be entirely the fault of the printer, and are not encouraging in the light they throw both on the author's familiarity with the languages in question and on his care. When it comes to his handling of Greek, words fail one. On pages 350-351 occurs what is offered as a transliteration of part of a Greek inscription published by A. C. Merriam, in *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1.328 ff. All the author had to do was to copy Professor Merriam's transliteration letter for letter. Yet in the forty-five short lines (20-25 letters each) of the selection printed I have counted 35 mistakes, not counting errors of spacing between words and errors of punctuation, which are numerous. But more significant than the number of mistakes is, their character. The author's knowledge of Greek surely must be of the slightest. Mr. Mason has been equally unfortunate in dealing with languages other than Greek. For instance, on

page 451 he undertakes to give a table of the Russian alphabet with the phonetic values of all the letters, and makes four mistakes in giving the phonetic values of the thirty-six letters.

In short, it seems clear that Mr. Mason has approached his task with very inadequate equipment, both as to training and knowledge, and as to habits of accuracy. Although, as has been said, he has succeeded in getting hold of most of the best sources for his work, it seems that he cannot be depended upon even to copy what his authorities tell him, without a percentage of error so large as to deprive his book of all claims to reliability. In most fields of which the reviewer has direct knowledge Mr. Mason is lamentably untrustworthy. This inevitably leads to the conclusion that none of his statements can safely be accepted without verification. One may well admire his energy, industry, and enthusiasm; but one must question the value of such an application of those excellent qualities, when unsupported by other qualities of nature or training which are at least as important for such a work.

This is not to deny that the book contains a vast deal of interesting material, and, of course, much that is sound and true. But to sift truth from error in the book would require very much more space than the limits of a review permit.

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PASSAGES FOR GREEK AND LATIN REPETITION

Among the books published by the Oxford University Press in 1919 is a book entitled *Passages for Greek and Latin Repetition*, Selected by Masters at Uppingham School. There is nothing in the book itself to explain the title (there is no Preface or Introduction; there are no notes). I assume that the passages, Greek and Latin, given in the 87 pages of the book, are meant to be committed to memory, by pupils evidently of a robust type than those we meet in the United States (or else to be read again and again). The selections are the following: Lucretius 1.80-101; Catullus, 101; Georgics 2.458-540, 4.387-527; Aeneid 1.278-296, 2.250-369, 4.584-692, 6.295-332, 8.41-853, 8.608-731, 9.410-445; Tibullus 1.1.1-36, 1.3.35-50, 1.10.1-50; Propertius 3.3.1-16 (2.12), 3.2.3-26; Ovid, *Heroides* 1.25-36, 4.1-58, 12.39-50, 93-108; *Amores* 1.3.5-20, 25-26, 3.9 (omitting lines 33-34), *Fasti* 1.149-160, 195-218, 2.93-118, 195-242, 3.737-760, 4.419-618 (omitting 463-480), *Tristia* 1.2.19-62; Martial 1.15, 1.55, 1.88, 4.13, 7.96, 10.61, 10.85, 10.103; Statius, *Silvae* 5.4; Claudianus, *Epigram* 2; Aeschylus, *Persae* 176-214, 350-471, *Prometheus Vinculus* 436-471; Sophocles, *Ajax* 646-692, *Electra* 1119-1170, *Antigone* 450-496; Euripides, *Medea* 1019-1080, *Hecuba* 518-582, *Hippolytus* 73-87.

Manifestly, this is a fine collection of passages, Greek and Latin, to be memorized by either student or teacher. The book will be an admirable book also to carry around with one in trolley cars or railroad trains.

C. K.